

Message Text

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44

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADP-00 SCA-01 L-03 JUSE-00 PRS-01 FSI-01

CIAE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00 USIA-12 /042 W

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R 231628 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9168

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2515

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: CGEN PINT VE

SUBJECT: TRANSMITTING LETTERS ROGATORY IN MATTER OF ELECTIONS
SYSTEMS COPR. VS. AVM CORP

REF: SATE A-2061

SUMMARY: IF EMBASSY DELIVERS LETTERS ROGATORY AS DIRECTED, COPEI-DOMINATED FOREIGN MINISTRY MAY LEAK THEM TO IMPLY CORRUPTION ON PART OF AVM AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION. A CASUAL READER OF INTERROGATORIES COULD SEE THEM AS INDICTMENT OF VENEZUELAN SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL AND VENEZUELAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM AS DISHONEST. IN ANY CASE THIS COULD PLACE US IN MIDDLE OF VENEZUELAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND RISK AVM'S CONTRACT. ACTION RECOMMENDED: EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT IF EDUARDO BLANCO URIBE TESTIMONY MUST BE SECURED AND IF DEFENDENTS AGREE HE BE ASKED TO GO TO MIAMI AND TESTIFY IN PERSON. END SUMMARY.

1. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, TRANSMITTAL OF LETTERS ROGATORY TO VENEZUELAN JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES IS HANDLED THROUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY. SUBJECT CASE, AS ARA/ NC KNOWS, CARRIED IMPLICATION THAT AGENT ACTING FOR US COMPANY AVM IN NEGOTIATIONS TO SELL ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES OFFERED OR PLANNED TO OFFER BRIBE TO VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS OR POLITICAL FIGURES. FACT THAT THERE IS COURT CASE IN US DESIGNED TO FORCE AVM TO PAY 10 PERCENT COMMISSION IS ALREADY FRONT PAGE NEWS. NATURE OF DEFENDANT'S INTERROGATORIES WILL MAKE SENSATIONAL PRESS MATERIAL, FOR THEY APPEAR TO INDICATE IMPROPER DEALINGS IN CONNECTION WITH VOTING MACHINE CONTRACT.

2. GOVERNMENT PARTY CPEI WAS AGAINST PURCHASE OF THESE MACHINES

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FROM BEGINNING, AND CAN (AN UNDOUBTEDLY WILL) USE LETTERS
ROGATORY
TO TRY TO SHOW CORRUPTION ON PART OF OPPOSITION PARTIES WHO ALMOST
UNANIMOUSLY ADVOCATED PURCHASE. FURTHER, NATURE OF
INTERROGATORIES
COULD IMPLY POSSIBLE CORRUPTION IN VENEZUELAN ELECTORAL PROCESS IN
GENERAL INCLUDING HIGHLY RESPECTED SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL.
EMBASSY REALIZES THAT NONE OF THIS IS SPECIFICALLY ALLEGED, BUT
WOULD BE IMPRESSION RECEIVED BY CASUAL READERS. PASSING LETTERS
ROGATORY THROUGH A COPEI- DOMINATED FOREIGN MINISTRY WILL ALMOST
INSURE THEIR USE TO EMBARRASS OPPOSITION AND PLACE US SQUARELY IN
MIDDLE OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

3. IDEAL SOLUTION WOULD BE FOR EDUARDO BLANCO URIBE TESTIMONY
REQUIREMENT TO BE DROPPED, BUT EMBASSY REALIZES THIS IS PROBABLY
IMPOSSIBLE. NEXT BEST ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO TRY TO PERSUADE
BLANCO URIBE TO TRAVEL TO MIAMI TO TESTIFY IN PERSON, PERHAPS BY
DEFENDANTS OFFERING TO PAY HIS EXPENSES. THIS WOULD LESSEN
EMBARRASS-
MENT POTENTIAL SINCE LOCAL COVERAGE WOULD BE MUCH LESS. SINCE
BLANCO IS DEFENDANTS' WITNESS, AVM SHOULD BE AWARE OF RISK THAT
DELIVERING LETTERS ROGATORY AS EMBASSY HAS BEEN DIRECTED COULD
PREJUDICE THEIR CONTRACT WITH GOV. ALREADY SOME ELEMENTS OF PRESS
ARE SPECULATING THAT COURT CASE WILL END IN BREAKING OF
CONTRACT.
MCCLINTOCK

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CARACA02515
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730335/aaaaiddz.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <13 FEB 2002 by garlanwa>
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US Department of State
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30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971218
Subject: TRANSMITTING LETTERS ROGATORY IN MATTER OF ELECTIONS SYSTEMS COPR. VS. AVM CORP
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